

~~SECRET~~

25X1

22 APR 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for Plans

SUBJECT: Military Assistance Alternatives for
Cambodia -- A Paper Prepared by
the WSAG/Cambodia Working Group

We attach the WSAG/Cambodia Group paper on military
assistance to Cambodia. The paper was prepared by an
interagency group chaired by

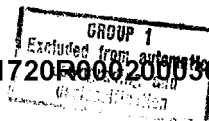
25X1

William E. Nelson
Chief, Far East Division

25X1

Attachment: As stated

~~SECRET~~



25X1

TOP SECRET/

25X1

MILITARY ASSISTANCE ALTERNATIVES FOR CAMBODIA

I. PURPOSE

This paper develops military assistance alternatives for Cambodia. It examines:

--The Interests of the US, Cambodia, and Important Third Countries,

--The Political and Economic Viability of the Present Cambodian Government,

--Enemy Intentions and Capabilities,

--Current Cambodian Military Capabilities and Alternative Defense Objectives,

--US Military Assistance Options.

4/21/70

TOP SECRET/

25X1

TOP SECRET/[REDACTED]

2

25X1

II. INTERESTS

A. Closely Concerned Countries

--United States: Principal US interests are to avoid (1) increased US costs and involvement in a widening war in Southeast Asia and (2) the installation of a Communist-dominated or pro-Hanoi Cambodian Government which would increase the threat to Vietnamization and Thai security. Within these constraints the US has an interest in curtailing North Vietnamese use of Cambodian territory, or at least making their presence in Cambodia more costly to the North Vietnamese.

--Cambodia: The major interest of the current government is in preserving itself in power. Their maximum goal is substantially reducing NVN/VC presence in Cambodia and their minimum goal is to limit NVN/VC territorial control and prevent the return of Sihanouk.

--North Vietnam: The major North Vietnamese interest lies in preserving their sanctuaries and sources of food in Cambodia. Their maximum goal is the promotion of a Cambodian government which would serve North Vietnamese interests in South Vietnam (e.g. use of Sihanoukville) and their long-term plans for domination of all Indo-China. Their minimum goal is protection of sanctuaries.

--South Vietnam: The major South Vietnamese interest lies in seeing the NVA/VC denied base areas and supplies in Cambodia. SVN also has an interest in seeing fair treatment for the Vietnamese minority in Cambodia.

Based on a consideration of maximum goals, there is little hope of a peaceful settlement in Cambodia. The existence of a Communist or pro-North Vietnamese Government would threaten Vietnamization and the Government of South Vietnam. Conversely, without Cambodian sanctuaries, the North Vietnamese effort in South Vietnam may be seriously impaired. However, there is a possibility that the US could achieve its overriding interests within a neutral Cambodia, which would acquiesce to some degree of NVN/VC presence and thus be acceptable to the enemy. Some forms of US assistance may encourage Cambodia to adopt a pro-American orientation rather than neutrality, and may result in a sharp North Vietnamese military reaction leading to deepening American involvement and increased costs.

TOP SECRET/[REDACTED]

25X1

B. Important Friendly Third Countries

--Thailand and Laos have major interests in preserving a neutral or friendly government in Cambodia for their territorial security.

--The remaining Asian states have only minimal interests in Cambodia. Indonesia is the most sympathetic to Cambodia, but it probably will extend only limited assistance in a non-aligned context.

25X1

--Of the Western countries, only France has direct interests in Cambodia. France has a major interest in preserving its economic position in Cambodia and in retaining influence in the former Indo-Chinese states, in particular in Hanoi. If US actions in Cambodia appear aimed at supplanting French influence, France will react unfavorably and, since the French are unwilling to commit themselves in Cambodia, this could be an inhibition to strong US action.

C. Important Communist Nations

--The Peoples Republic of China has an interest in ensuring that North Vietnamese capability in South Vietnam is not weakened significantly, in promoting a neutralist or Communist Cambodia friendly to China rather than the USSR, and in keeping US influence in Cambodia to a minimum.

--The Soviet Union has an interest in promoting without substantial Soviet involvement, a Cambodian government friendly to them rather than China and which allows basic North Vietnamese capability in South Vietnam to be preserved.

D. International Considerations

--Cambodia publicly renounced its status as a protocol state to SEATO in 1962.

--The ICC will not be an effective tool given Communist opposition and the unwillingness of India and Canada to become involved.

--The UN role is limited by the unwillingness of the Secretary General to become involved and the opposition of

the Communist and some neutralist members. Major actors in this conflict: China, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam, are not members.

III. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT

A. Introduction

This section examines the political and economic viability of the present Cambodian Government.

The government has been in power for just over one month, having deposed Prince Sihanouk, the founder of modern Cambodia and the nation's most prominent political figure since Cambodian independence in 1953. This government is trying to establish itself in the face of a major Vietnamese Communist military threat. The government is receiving no significant outside assistance, although it has made specific requests for aid to Australia, Indonesia, Japan, and the US. The French have also been approached.

B. Strengths

Popular support

--Over 85% of Cambodia's six million people are Khmer and harbor a centuries old hatred of the Vietnamese. They consider themselves engaged in a war of national salvation against the Vietnamese Communists. The present government in Phnom Penh launched and leads this popular cause and thus enjoys the support of the great majority of the Cambodian people.

--The atmosphere in the capital has been generally calm and controlled since Sihanouk's ouster with the citizenry apparently backing the Lon Nol regime.

--In the countryside, apart from a series of brief but violent anti-government demonstrations in a number of Eastern border provinces in late March, there has been almost no overt reaction to Sihanouk's dismissal. The demonstrations which occurred in areas of heavy Vietnamese Communist infiltration and influence, were crushed quickly and brutally by the army. Elsewhere in the country there have been no significant anti-government disorders.

TOP SECRET/

5

25X1

--The government is trying to win the support of the conservative peasantry. A number of propaganda teams composed of students, Buddhist monks and local officials are circulating throughout the countryside carrying the government's message to the peasants. Although government leaders have estimated that they can consolidate their hold over the peasants in two or three months, if the Communists do not cause major military disruptions in the more populated rural areas, there is little information available on which to evaluate this judgment.

--At the moment there are no signs that any serious indigenous challenges to the government's authority are developing in rural areas and there are no indications that there has been any significant peasant response to Sihanouk's call to the Cambodian people to form an armed resistance movement in the bush.

Political Leadership

--Two men, Lon Nol and Sirik Matak, now share political power in Phnom Penh. Prime Minister Lon Nol, the nation's senior military figure, has had considerable experience in government and the armed forces. Lon Nol previously served as Prime Minister in 1967 and has held the position of Commander of FARK for several years. He reportedly enjoys considerable support from the armed forces and is widely known and respected throughout Cambodia. Lon Nol has apparently delegated all non-military policy making to Deputy Prime Minister, Prince Sirik Matak, a tough and capable conservative who has held many positions of responsibility in previous governments. Supporting Lon Nol and Sirik Matak is a small but capable and experienced group of second level leaders.

--The government's main power base is the armed forces which has so far steadfastly backed Lon Nol. The Civil Administration in Phnom Penh and the Provinces has pledged its loyalty to the government. The National Assembly, the country's only popularly elected body, is also behind the regime. The Buddhist clergy which wields considerable influence among the people has also given its support to the government. The heads of the most important Buddhist order have spoken out in public for the government and monks in the countryside are being used as propagandists. Youth and students have enthusiastically backed the new regime. University students

TOP SECRET/

25X1

TOP SECRET/[REDACTED]

6

25X1

have been at the forefront of anti-Vietnamese and pro-government demonstrations and parades. Many have volunteered for the army.

--There has been no significant internal opposition to the regime. There are no political parties in Cambodia, except the remains of Sihanouk's personal political movement, the Sangkum. This body has been taken over by the government. The small Cambodian Communist Party was never an effective political force and has not surfaced politically since 1962.

Economy

--The recent harvest produced a near record rice crop and there should be sufficient rice to feed the expanded armed forces.

C. Vulnerabilities

Political

--Aside from the overt military threat from the Vietnamese Communists (see Section III), the major threat to the present government is the possibility that Sihanouk will return and, with Vietnamese Communist assistance, lead a jungle-based resistance movement. Sihanouk could probably attract a substantial following, but it is not presently possible to determine just how large or effective this would be. Much would depend on the degree of support the Communists would commit to Sihanouk. The taint of this support would have some negative effect on Sihanouk's recruiting efforts, in view of the Cambodian's deep-seated hatred and fear of the Vietnamese. Moreover, Sihanouk's return could have a debilitating effect on many of the government's more cautious or lukewarm supporters, particularly in the face of strong NVA/VC pressure and economic difficulties.

--The indigenous insurgents, or "Khmer Rouge," represent the main indigenous opposition force. Although hard evidence is lacking, the total numerical strength of the Cambodian insurgents probably does not exceed 5,000. There is no proof that this three-year-old insurgency is a coordinated movement but there is evidence that the insurgents along the Eastern border receive arms and direction from the Viet Cong. The

TOP SECRET/[REDACTED]

25X1

movement has had little popular appeal and its terrorist tactics have alienated many peasants. If it could identify itself with Sihanouk, it might attract a wider following in the rural areas. A recently acquired COSVN document indicates that the Vietnamese Communists are now placing greater emphasis on helping to build a viable Cambodian Communist movement. In sum, it is probable that the Cambodian Communists will emerge in the next several months as a greater problem for Phnom Penh.

Economic

--The ousting of Sihanouk and the resulting confrontation with the Communists considerably dampen short-term economic prospects. Exports of rice--Cambodia's major source of foreign exchange--may be significantly disrupted by an extensive mobilization of civilian trucks for military movements. Shipping to Cambodian ports has dropped off about 40% since the March 18 deposition of Sihanouk. A shortage of domestic transport may also produce a disruption in imports, taxes on which are the main source of domestic revenue. Domestic commerce undoubtedly has been hampered by the harassment of the Vietnamese (and perhaps Chinese) who make up a substantial segment of the local business communities.

--The government budget will be under considerable strain produced by the costs of the military mobilization now under way. Foreign exchange reserves are low, and the Cambodians have already asked the US for \$50 million in financial assistance.

--Cambodia has no domestic sources of oil supply. There is a refinery in Sihanoukville that can meet all the country's major petroleum needs, except aviation gasoline, if supplied with crude oil from abroad.

D. Conclusions

The present government appears to have consolidated its position during the month since Sihanouk's ouster and in the near term (the next 90 days) its prospects for remaining in power are good, providing the Vietnamese Communists do not launch a major offensive that overruns Phnom Penh. The primary reasons for the short-term viability of the current government are the surge of nationalistic support opposing the Vietnamese enemy, and the present lack of any significant indigenous opposition. In the longer term, the continued Vietnamese Communist military threat and the lack of significant external support for the Cambodian Government are elements of uncertainty.

TOP SECRET

8

IV. ENEMY CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS

General Capabilities

The VC/NVA forces in Cambodia at this time consist of 20,000-40,000 personnel organized into 14 Combat Ready Regiments. These regiments have the capability of operating approximately 30 to 60 days with current supplies. Adequate food is available locally to sustain these operations. No unusual VC/NVA morale problems have been detected.

General Limitations

Increased VC/NVA actions in Cambodia might result in increased political visibility, loss of personnel, supplies and equipment that could be used in Vietnam, and restrictions on troop and equipment movements due to the imminent rainy season.

Intentions

VC/NVA forces could:

-- a expand and remain in base areas in Eastern Cambodia:

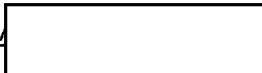
-- The VC/NVA have conducted overt actions to expand their base areas and have the military capability to defend these areas. The additional size of the base area provides protection against GVN and Cambodian incursions and insures an adequate supply of rice to feed VC/NVA forces.

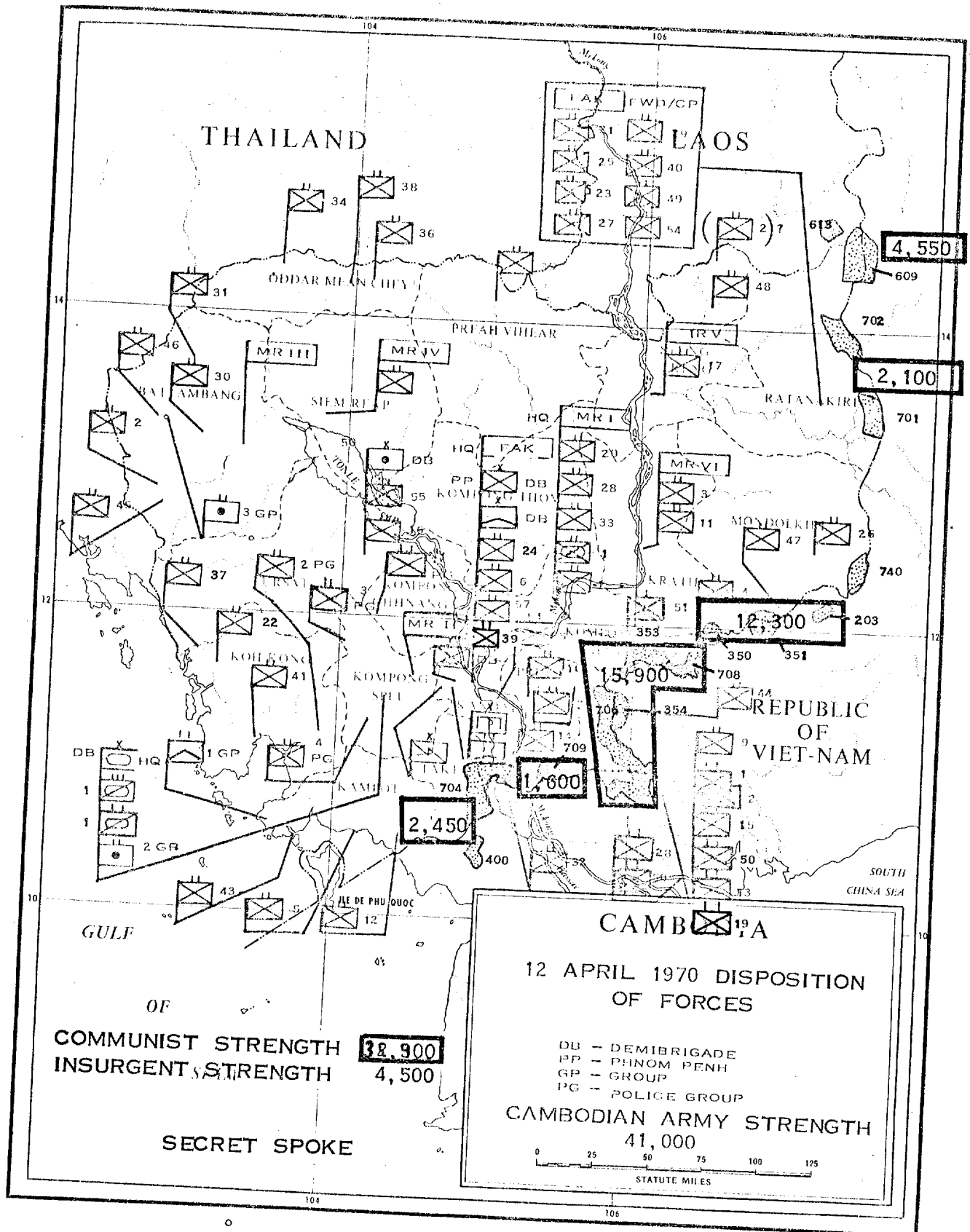
-- On the other hand, if VC/NVA forces remain in their base areas, it is unlikely that the Cambodian government would permit them to be supplied through Sihanoukville.

-- b apply pressure on the Lon Nol Government to accommodate and permit Communist forces to freely use Cambodian territory.

-- The VC/NVA can conduct military operations from the base areas against Cambodian LOCs with the demonstrated capability to interdict at will. They can isolate or defeat Cambodian units as has been recently demonstrated in Kandal and Svay Rieng

TOP SECRET





25X1

TOP SECRET

10

Provinces. The VC/NVA can also inspire insurgent/guerrilla actions and conduct psychological operations among ethnic groups against the RKG. Thus far VC/ NVA forces have been able to pursue this startegy without significantly degrading their capability in South Vietnam.

-- Not withstanding, to apply continuous pressure on the Lon Nol government takes time and cannot guarantee Cambodian cooperation. Lengthy operations may require additional forces, degrading the VC/NVA capability in South Vietnam.

-- c mount an overt attack to topple the Lon Nol Government.

-- Approximately 10 regiments are immediately available to mount an attack on Phnom Penh; an attack with this sized force would be successful. Such an action would topple the Cambodian Government and give VC/NVA forces full use of Cambodia.

-- The commitment of forces to seize Phnom Penh would reduce significantly (by 33%) VC /NVA main force capabilities in the II, III and IV Corps areas in South Vietnam. Overrunning the Lon Nol Government by overt military force would require some North Vietnamese administration of Cambodian affairs. The North Vietnamese may be concerned that such an action may trigger a U.S. military response.

In conclusion, the North Vietnamese are most likely at this time to pursue course b -- applying pressure on the Lon Nol Government.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

25X1

11

CURRENT CAMBODIAN MILITARY CAPABILITIES
AND ALTERNATIVE DEFENSE OBJECTIVES

Introduction

This section examines Cambodian military capabilities to include their ability to absorb and effectively utilize various levels of military assistance. It develops three alternative Cambodian defense objectives:

--defend minimum territory to defend viable Cambodian state,

--contain VC/NVA in base areas,

--force VC/NVA to leave Cambodian soil.

Finally, the section examines military assistance required for the Cambodians to accomplish each objective.

TOP SECRET

25X1

A. Friendly military situation and capabilities

Cambodian Armed Forces. The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (FARK) have a strength of about 40,000 men consisting of: 37,000 Army personnel organized in 55 infantry and commando battalions and 9 specialized half brigades; 1,750 Air Force personnel organized into three wings; 1,400 man Navy organized in Coastal and River Groups.

In addition, there are an estimated 55,000-65,000 paramilitary forces including Provincial Guards (16,000), Home Guards (30,000 part-time volunteers) Police (15,000) and National Youth movement (5,000).

The Armed Forces are the power base of the present government. The officer corps is conscious of its elite social position and is politically sensitive. Officers are generally nationalistic and non-communist.

However, the Armed Forces are plagued with a shortage of experienced combat officers, especially at the field grade. Corruption on the part of officers, evidenced by involvement in smuggling activities (usually through bribes with the NVA/VC) prevails throughout FARK.

Although French Advisors conduct professional sound service schools, the lack of combat training at battalion and higher level limits the value of French instruction. Enlisted men are generally well-disciplined and loyal. Their technical proficiency suffers from a low education level and the lack of realistic training, including weapons firing. However, most will fight the VC/NVA if properly organized and led.

FARK pay is low but indications are that personnel are paid regularly and food and shelter are considered adequate. Items of uniform are in short supply, especially boots.

Army. Army units are manned at one-half of authorized strength. Some units, particularly the commando battalion, have a reasonable degree of combat effectiveness. The Army is capable of small unit tactical operations, but it is untrained in operations utilizing units larger than a battalion.

The Army is not considered capable of organizing an effective defense against an all-out attack by the VC/NVA, primarily because it lacks combat experience and training in large scale operations. But in the absence of such an all-out attack, the FARK has a reasonable chance of successfully absorbing still higher levels of VC/NVA pressure.

Navy. The Cambodian Navy is organized to protect the coastal and inland waterways and to support ground forces in maintaining inland waterways. Both the Coastal and River Command have demonstrated fairly quick reaction to territorial violations by Thai fishing junks, South Vietnamese forces and insurgents. However, in general, it is only moderately effective as a river patrol and could offer ground troops only limited gunfire support. It would be ineffective in combating a determined sea-borne incursion. The Navy is hampered by lack of good officers and non-commissioned officers, obsolete equipment and limited funds.

Air Force. The Air Force is incapable of defending Cambodia against a determined air attack but has a limited interdiction and close support capability. However, it has not trained for these roles. Lack of training and skilled personnel indicated by the low aircraft serviceability rate severely restricts Air Force capability.

Paramilitary. Cambodia has a variety of paramilitary forces. These forces are primarily concerned with internal security. In an emergency, they could provide a sizeable input (about 60,000) to the ground forces provided sufficient time, outside logistic and most important, the organizational apparatus was established to effectively utilize these personnel. The Provincial Guards, the mainstay of the Cambodian police, are the largest (15,000) full time, fully armed and uniformed paramilitary force. The Guards' 20-brigades deployed in each of Cambodia's 19 provinces are manned at one-half of authorized strength. The other paramilitary organization include Home Guards or CHIVAPOL (30,000 part-time volunteers), Police (15,000) and national youth movement. The equipment and potential combat effectiveness of paramilitary forces are considered to be less adequate than that of the regular Army.

Equipment. The Army is presently equipped predominantly with the Soviet-Chinese Communist family of small arms but also has considerable mix of other weapons, including U.S. weapons and equipment provided before 1963. Artillery is limited and consists of US 105 Howitzers, Chinese Communist 82mm mortars and 76mm and 122 Howitzers, and some French 37mm and 75mm field guns. Armor units have about 150 vehicles including 12 U.S. light tanks (M-24), armored cars and half tracks.

The Cambodian Air Force has 119 aircraft including only 24 Fighter/Attack types, (13 MIG-17, 11 AlH, and 15 T-28) and 10 helicopters (French). The aircraft are old and aircraft and airfield maintenance are poor. In addition the incommision rate is very low, and there is a shortage of POL and Cambodia has few navigation aids. Only one airfield (Phom Phen) has a hydraulic fueling capability. Refueling at other airfields is primarily done with jerrycans.

Cambodia does not have the capability to manufacture military equipment or ammunition and depends on outside sources for POL. Although the quantities of communist small arms and heavy weapons are adequate for present force levels and to equip an expanded force of about 70,000 men, spare part shortages and poor maintenance practices would attrite these weapons rapidly in a combat environment.

There were 3,000 metric tons of ammunition available in depots at the end of 1969. It is intimated that these stocks will provide sufficient small arms ammunition for about 100 days of sustained combat. Field artillery mortars ammunition would be depleted more quickly.

Expansion Capacity. Cambodia has sufficient new manpower to carry out a several fold expansion in its armed forces. There are presently a maximum of 815,000 males fit for military service. This is about twice the number required to meet Lon Nol's plan for a total force of 410,000.

Alternative Defense Objectives. It is assumed that the RKG general strategy gives first priority to the preservation of a politically viable Cambodia against

the single threat of VC/NVA military force in the eastern and southeastern portions of the country. This would involve the uninterrupted functioning of the government, preservation intact of the armed forces, and physical control of a certain minimum amount of territory.

Having once assured itself of its minimum requirements, the RKG would then attempt to improve its position at the expense of the VC/NVA, pressuring them, to the extent of their capability, to leave the country.

Based on the foregoing, there are three alternative Cambodian defense objectives:

-- Objective 1: Defend minimum territory to insure a viable Cambodian state;

-- Objective 2: Contain VC/NVA in base areas which permit ground communications between the RKG and all of its provincial capitals,

-- Objective 3: Force the VC/NVA to leave Cambodian soil.



Objective 1. Defend Minimum Territory (see map)

Accomplishing this objective requires both action by the Cambodian Government and external military assistance. First it requires, as a minimum, an expansion of FARK by 30,000.

Cambodian Actions

The RKG has already called 10,000 reservists back to active duty; in addition, recruiting is under way to organize some 30 additional battalions. These actions would increase the FARK to about 80 battalions plus specialized units and a total strength of about 65,000. It is estimated that FARK has the capability to find leadership to organize, and give minimal training to an increase of approximately 30,000 provided they are organized into lightly armed infantry units; and that they can do this without undertaking a special training program. This is so in view of the 10,000 reservists around whom these new units could be built. The FARK also has sufficient numbers of rifles and carbines to give each man some kind of personal weapon; however, these weapons could not be standard.

In pursuit of Objective 1, the FARK could take the following actions at this time without outside help:

- pull forces in northeast back toward Mekong,
- strengthen the critical sector from Kampong Cham southwest to Takeo with approximately 50% of the units now positioned along the Thai border and redeploy all artillery to vicinity of Phnom Penh,
- organize and train a strategic reserve of about 2,000 men,
- construct defensive positions throughout the major threat area using military supervision and civilian labor,
- increase the size of the armed forces.

Military Assistance

Minimum necessary with low level VC/NVA pressure. The extent to which the short run survival of the RKG is dependent

on the VC/NVA decision as to priorities has already been discussed. If the Communists don't move to topple the Lon Nol Government, but rather limit themselves to raids, harassments by fire, and attack on small isolated units, the FARK can probably take care of itself in near term--three to six months. However, without some external assistance, any level of combat--however low--forced on them by the VC/NVA--will, in the long run, immobilize and incapacitate the FARK. This will come about as key categories of supplies are exhausted. Primary among these are: ammunition, POL, and spare parts. In short, without some outside military aid, the FARK will ultimately be incapable of functioning. FARK morale may deteriorate quicker from supplies being exhausted.

Assistance to achieve Objective 1 with continued NVA/VC pressure. The following equipment and supplies would be necessary to sustain the required 30,000 increase in Cambodian forces:

- small arms and ammunition,^{1/}
- personal clothing and equipment for 30,000.
- trucks: 200
- radios: 300
- ammunition: 60-day stock plus resupply for 15 months,
- medical supplies.

Additional Needs:

- fortification material and hand tools,
- river patrol craft
- POL tanker at Phnom Penh
- emergency bridging
- military field rations.

^{1/} Cambodian weapons stock will be adequate for the 30,000 expansion if compatible ammunition is available; if not, US small arms and ammunition would be required.

Impact of Preceding Cambodian Actions and Military Assistance on Cambodian Ability to Achieve Objective 1

Current estimates credit the VC/NVA with the capability to take Phnom Penh, using a force of 11-14 regiments if they strike at this time. However, there are a number of reasons why the Communists would hesitate to make a maximum effort of this sort:

- not necessary to ensure base areas in Cambodia,
- would detract from effort in South Vietnam,
- would reveal to world the presence of NVA forces in Cambodia and South Vietnam.

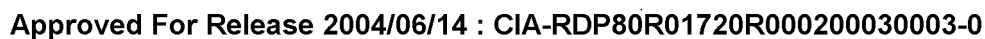
The longer they wait, the greater the losses the VC/NVA must expect to take assuming FARK is receiving some outside military assistance. Unless undertaken during the next thirty days, the rainy season water level will inhibit large scale movement toward Phnom Penh.

The redeployments and increases proposed for Objective 1 give the FARK the capability for deploying a force of 50 to 60 battalions (about 30,000) plus paramilitary forces into the area south and east of Phnom Penh.

In summary, the VC/NVA capability must be diminished by the disadvantages to them associated with electing to expend it on an attack on Phnom Penh. At the same time the FARK capability is appreciated by the psychological lift that would come from receiving outside aid, and the absorption of additional hardware. Taking these together, it is reasonable to estimate that if the FARK can achieve the Objective 1 capability, they will have a fighting chance to survive.

Delivery time required to achieve Objective 1:

- to begin delivery by air: ten days.
- to complete delivery from US military sources: 30-45 days.
- for FARK to absorb, train and deploy approximately 30 bns: 90-120 days.



In order to illustrate the delivery problems associated with the Objective 1 items, the attached chart contains details for a model force of 30,000 comprising 36 Cambodian type infantry battalions.

Objective 2. Contain VC/NVA in base areas which do not inhibit RKG ground contact with all of its provincial capitals (see map)

Requirements for Objective 2

To achieve the capability for Objective 2, an increase in the strength of Air Force, Navy and Army support and service units is required. More infantry would probably be necessary. While the extent of the requirements for either of these categories cannot be estimated on the basis of information presently available, development of requisite capability might be accomplished in two stages:

Stage One: Increase and standardize support elements:

--Standardize field artillery units with US 105mm Howitzers and increase the number of six-gun batteries to the extent that trained personnel permit; perhaps a 25% increase in the number of guns.

--Similar actions with respect to the Army's Engineer, Armor, Signal, Ordnance, etc. units.

--Ensure the capability of all Air Force fighter aircraft to use US ordnance, and set up a channel for getting these munitions to them.

--Further strengthen the river patrol capability of the Navy.

It is estimated that FARK has some capability to achieve first stage increases without outside technical assistance. A more precise estimate can only be made on the ground in Cambodia.

Stage Two: Institute a mobilization training program to provide for expanded recruit training; specialist and NCO development; and an OCS type program for junior officers. FARK would benefit from outside help in expanding training programs for officers and technicians.

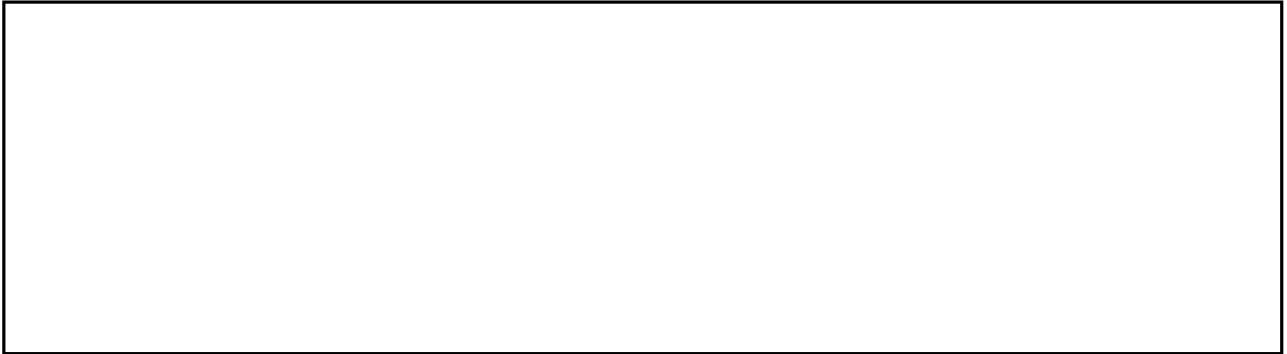
25X1

Approved For Release 2004/06/14 : CIA-RDP80R01720R000200030003-0

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2004/06/14 : CIA-RDP80R01720R000200030003-0

TOP SECRET/



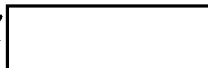
25X1

Summary--No decision regarding Objective 2 should be made on the basis of information currently held in Washington.

Objective 3. Force the VC/NVA to leave Cambodian soil

A military capability to achieve this option is so far beyond the minimum requirements of the RKG as to be valueless to contemplate at this time.

TOP SECRET/



25X1

TOP SECRET

23

VI. U.S. ASSISTANCE OPTIONS

This section presents and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of five U.S. assistance options:

- (1) limited U.S. assistance for psychological purposes to provide for force subsistence;
- (2) multilateral assistance;
- (3) U.S. assistance sufficient to permit Cambodian defense of minimum territory for a viable state against continued NVA/VC offensive pressure;
- (4) U.S. assistance sufficient to permit Cambodian forces to contain NVA/VC forces in Cambodian border areas.

An option sufficient to permit Cambodian forces to expel NVA/VC forces from Cambodia is not presented because it was judged infeasible.

OPTION 1: Limited U.S. Assistance for Psychological Purposes and to Provide for Force Subsistence

Principal Features

The U.S. would provide limited assistance including small arms, ammunition, medical supplies, radios to Cambodian forces. This assistance would be designed to boost Cambodian morale and confidence and to permit Cambodian forces to continue to function.

This assistance could be provided overtly and covertly. For example, medical supplies and clothing could be provided overtly while arms and ammunition could be provided covertly, directly by the U.S. or through South Vietnam.

Major Considerations

The utility of this alternative depends primarily on North Vietnamese intentions. If they intend to achieve only their basic interest of maintaining sanctuaries and food supplies in order to prosecute the war in South Vietnam, this option has some significant advantages. Principally, it may allow a solution of the Cambodian problem through a neutral Cambodia

which would satisfy the minimum interests of all closely concerned countries. Cambodia would acquiesce to only limited NVA/VC use of its territory and this would not require substantial U.S. involvement.

Principal Advantages

If North Vietnam is only applying limited pressure on the Cambodian government, this option would:

- preserve Cambodian neutrality and not pressure the North Vietnamese into seeking to overthrow the present Cambodian government, nor would it raise the confidence of the Cambodian government so they attempt military operations that may trigger an unwanted NVA reaction;
- provide maximum opportunities for negotiations and generation of international support for Cambodia;
- allow time for non-aligned and other Asian nations to provide assistance;
- limit U.S. involvement and have minimal risk of adverse political and other consequences of having another Southeast Asian state dependent on the U.S.;
- keep our options open in the event of civil war or the installation of a new Cambodian government;
- conserve U.S. resources, particularly as these resources might fall into North Vietnamese or VC hands.

If North Vietnam attempts to overthrow the Cambodian government, this option would:

- spare us the necessity of making potentially expensive and open-ended commitments of U.S. personnel, resources and prestige in Cambodia;

25X1

TOP SECRET /

25

-- place the blame for the war squarely on the North Vietnamese;

-- conserves Cambodian military and political resources. Given that the Cambodians are presently incapable of defending against a determined enemy attack, but would probably conduct guerrilla operations, an overt NVA/VC attack could result in North Vietnam's involvement in a protracted guerrilla war.

Disadvantages

If the enemy does not intend to mount an overt attack on Phnom Penh, the major disadvantage of this option would be that it does not guarantee that the current Cambodian government can conduct a sustained defense against continued enemy offensive pressure.

If the enemy intends to overrun Phnom Penh, this option would:

-- allow installment of a government that would provide additional assistance to the NVA and VC and increase the threat to our position in South Vietnam;

-- be a threat to Thai security and to U.S. commitments to Thailand.

25X1

TOP SECRET /

TOP SECRET/ []

26

OPTION 2: Multilateral Assistance

Principal Features

This option would provide greater assistance than Option 1 through multilateral cooperation among the U.S. and other countries such as Australia, Japan, Indonesia, and possibly France. This option would draw on third country as well as U.S. resources.

Major Considerations

° The feasibility of this option depends on the willingness of other countries to act in support of Cambodia. France has already indicated it would not participate in such an arrangement. Indonesian and Australian cooperation might be possible. Japan has vaguely suggested it might provide some financial assistance.

Advantages

This option would:

- be less likely than any direct U.S. assistance option to compromise Cambodian neutrality and provoke an unwanted North Vietnamese response,

- keep open the possibility of a negotiated settlement,

- be less costly to the U.S. in resources than direct aid, and reduce chances of the U.S. being pulled into a major support program thus, it would be more acceptable on the domestic political scene than unilateral direct U.S. aid,

- involve other states in a regional solution and allow a non-U.S. advisory effort,

- provide assistance and thus confidence and some flexibility for the Cambodian Government,

- aid through this channel, if France were involved might be more immediately effective because of French expertise and experience in Cambodia.

TOP SECRET/ []

25X1

TOP SECRET/

27

Disadvantages

-- This option depends on what the North Vietnamese do. The more doubtful the chances of the Lon Nol Government retaining power, the more reluctant potential supporters will be.

-- To date none of the possible participating countries has indicated that it would participate in such an arrangement.

-- Aid may not be provided in sufficient quantities and in adequate time to be of benefit. French budgetary constraints and reluctance to become militarily involved in Southeast Asia would impose delays and limit military aid. Most other potential suppliers have limited resources of their own and appear reluctant to help.

-- Thus this alternative would be feasible only for the minimal Cambodian option of surviving if the North Vietnamese do not attempt an overt attack to over-throw the Government. Assuming the enemy continues to pressure the Cambodian government but does not mount a full scale attack, even assistance sufficient to contain the NVA/VC in base areas would require such quantities of U.S. materiel that any multilateral arrangement would probably be only a facade.

25X1

TOP SECRET/ []

28

OPTION 3: Direct U.S. Assistance Sufficient to Defend Minimum Territory For A Viable Cambodian State

Principal Features

Under this option the U.S. would provide sufficient assistance to permit Cambodian forces to conduct sustained defense operations against NVA/VC attacks not designed to overrun Phnom Penh. The assistance includes: arms, ammunition and personal equipment for 30,000 additional forces, several hundred trucks and radios, and fortification and bridging materials. Delivery of this assistance would require several hundred U.S. aircraft sorties or delivery by ship, thus precluding covert assistance. The assistance for the option would cost about \$80 million if delivered by air or \$40 million by sea. This option would require either French military advisory assistance or a U.S. mobile advisory team of at least four persons for a minimal period of 60 to 90 days. In any event, receipt in Cambodia would require the presence of U.S. personnel.

Major Considerations

This option like all others considered would not permit Cambodian forces to cope with a NVA/VC attack to occupy Phnom Penh. However, this option would probably permit Cambodian forces to cope with continued NVA/VC pressure short of a full scale attack.

This option would all but foreclose the alternative of a neutral Cambodia. If NVA/VC forces responded by intensifying their attacks, further U.S. assistance would be required.

Advantages

-- There is a fair probability that this option would provide enough assistance to enable the Cambodian Government to achieve its basic interest of self-preservation. While the full impact of assistance would not be felt for several months, the fact that such assistance is being provided may build confidence of the Cambodian leadership and armed forces, and help the regime to maintain popular support.

25X1

TOP SECRET []

25X1

TOP SECRET /

29

- This option provides aid in quantities that can be absorbed.
- Compared with other increased assistance alternatives, this option conserves U.S. resources and has little adverse impact on on-going programs. Most materiel requirements could be provided from stocks or from reserve units.
- This option would provide some encouragement to other small states faced with a threat from a superior neighbor.
- It may pressure the North Vietnamese into negotiations.

Disadvantages

- Direct U.S. assistance may be counter-productive to the U.S. interest of avoiding a wider war in Southeast Asia and increasing U.S. involvement. It may trigger further North Vietnamese offensive actions and encourage Moscow and Peking to step up their assistance. The North Vietnamese may believe they can influence the outcome of the war in Vietnam by drawing U.S. deeper in to Cambodia and capitalizing on adverse U.S. domestic opinion.
- This option would probably result in a Cambodia totally dependent on the U.S.
- It would require significant expenditures (\$40-80 million for the first year).
- At would lead to unfavorable political reaction in the U.S. and may drive away potential neutral supporters of Cambodia.

25X1

TOP SECRET /

OPTION 4: U.S. Assistance Sufficient to Provide Cambodian Forces with the Capability to Contain the North Vietnamese in Limited Border Sanctuaries

Principal Features

This option would require a major and sustained U.S. assistance effort costing roughly \$300 million or more the first year. It would be designed to eventually permit Cambodian forces to contain NVA/VC forces in limited border sanctuaries. A large U.S. military assistance group would need to be established in Phnom Penh. In addition the Cambodian government would have to demonstrate a great capability to reform and reorganize their forces, to mobilize and train skilled manpower, and to mobilize and manage large amounts of resources and forces. It is not possible to determine the feasibility of this option on the basis of evidence presently available in Washington.

Advantages

-- If feasible this option would almost guarantee the survival of Cambodia by providing them with a capability to cope with all NVA/VC threat except a sustained overt attack on Phnom Penh.

-- This option would be in accord with the minimum Cambodian goal of forcing NVA/VC units to return to the limited sanctuaries they enjoyed before the overthrow of Sihanouk.

-- This option would place additional pressure on the North Vietnamese by forcing them to secure two fronts, thereby significantly reducing their capability in South Vietnam.

Disadvantages

-- The disadvantages for the preceding Option 3 apply.

-- It is questionable whether this option is feasible, and such a determination cannot be made without a complete assessment in Phnom Penh.

-- This option would require U.S. expenditures of several hundred million dollars in the first year and would require a substantial

25X1

TOP SECRET /

31.

diversion in material from the Vietnamzation program.

-- A long time period, at least a year, would lapse before any substantial improvement in Cambodian capabilities above that achievable with Option 3. By this time the North Vietnamese could have overturned the Cambodian government.

25X1

TOP SECRET /